

THE CHERRY BLOSSOM SEASON IN JAPAN

Photographs from Adachi.



On the banks of the Araka River.

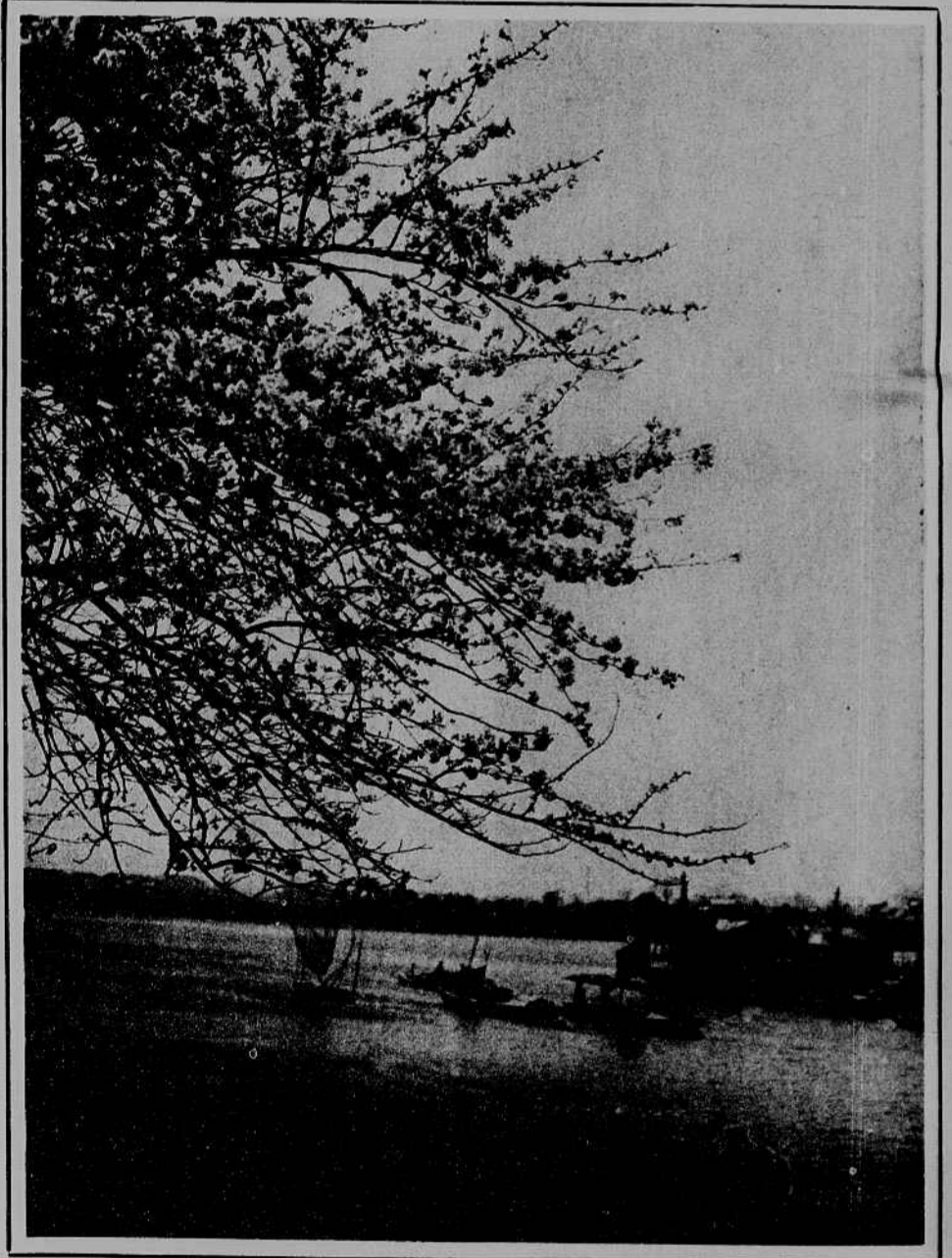
In Japan, a flower is never a mere flower. To a prince as well as to a jinrikisha man, it is a cult. When the cherry flowers open, the entire city of Tokio shuts up shop. The Mayor heads a municipal procession to the many famous spots in the vicinity to pay the city's respects to the flower. People compose classic couplets in honor of it and hang them on the cherry boughs. Some years ago, one of the first great battleships, built at a Japanese naval yard out of Japanese steel, was launched. But it happened that the launching of the great battleship came on the same day as the opening of the cherry flowers. And to the opening of the cherry season the Tokio newspapers devoted something like three columns while the launching ceremony of the great Japan-made battleship was given scant half a column. The bare mention of the Sumida River, of Koganei, of the banks along the River Araka, is quite enough to transport the common workaday folks of Tokio into a dream world.



Over the historic Sakurada.



At Ueno Park.



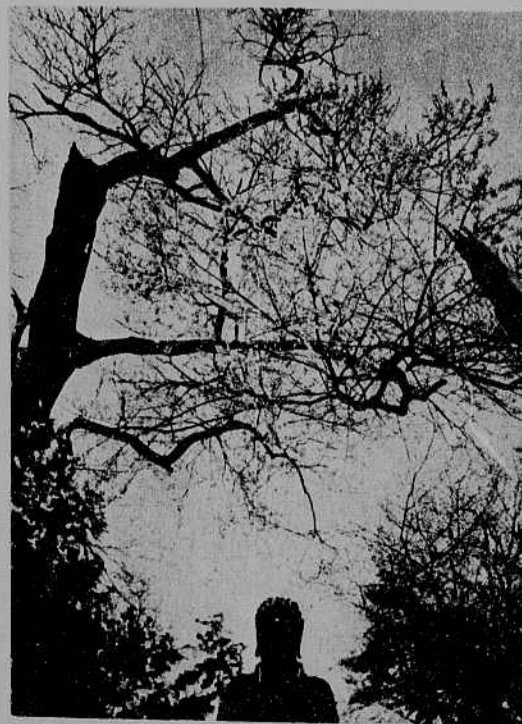
River Sumida, the most famous cherry blossom region in Japan.



Working people on a picnic to celebrate the cherry blossom season.



Asakusa Park.



In Ueno Park.



Cherry blossoms at Koganei.